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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/803,051	03/18/2004	Ronald S. Plantan	011351.52877US	4611
23911 7590 09/12/2007 CROWELL & MORING LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP P.O. BOX 14300 WASHINGTON, DC 20044-4300			EXAMINER BURCH, MELODY M	
			ART UNIT 3683	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 09/12/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/803,051

Applicant(s)

PLANTAN, RONALD S.

Examiner

Melody M. Burch

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 August 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 19 September 2006 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION***Drawings***

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the limitation of the friction portion radially inward from a radially innermost friction surface of the friction portion as first recited at line 6 of claim 1 must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered. Examiner notes that as currently shown there is no element situated radially inward from the radially innermost friction surface of the friction portion 3. As best understood, Examiner notes that reference numerals "10" and "11" are radially inward from the radially innermost friction surface of the friction portion, but no portion of the friction portion is found in that area.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New

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Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The phrase "friction portion radially inward from a radially innermost friction surface of the friction portion" as first recited at line 6 of claim 1 is indefinite. It is unclear to the Examiner as to which area of the device Applicant intends to refer to. The remaining claims are rejected due to their dependency from the independent claims including the above limitation. Also see drawing objection above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent 3958671 to Muller in view of US Patent 5222568 to Higasa et al.

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Re: claims 1-3 and 16. Muller shows in figure 1 a brake device comprising a hub portion 13, a friction or rotor portion 21a, the friction or rotor portion formed as a generally planar ring as shown in figure 1 and a connecting flange portion shown to the right of the lead line of 21, wherein the connecting flange portion connects a radially outer region of the hub portion to a radially inner region of the friction or rotor portion radially inward from a radially innermost friction surface of the friction portion as best understood, the connecting flange portion has a length such that when the hub portion and a wheel rim 19 adapted to be mounted on a hub end of a vehicle axle 10 are located at the hub end of the axle, the friction or rotor portion is outboard of the wheel rim, and the friction portion has an outer radius greater than a greatest inner radius of the wheel rim.

Muller fails to show or suggest the limitation of the brake device being a brake disc.

Higasa et al. teach in figure 7 the use of a brake device in the form of a brake disc wherein the friction portion is outboard of the wheel rim 61.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have modified the brake device of Muller to have been in the form of a brake disc, as taught by Higasa et al., in order to provide a functionally equivalent means of retarding a rotating element.

Re: claims 4-6 and 17-19. Examiner notes that the heat conduction limiting section of Muller, as modified, includes a section in the area of element 41 in figure 1 of Muller have reduced area as a result of the aperture used to accommodate the fastener.

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Re: claims 7-9 and 20-22. Muller, as modified, teach in figure 1 of Muller the limitation wherein at least one ventilation aperture shown surrounding element 18 is provided in the connecting flange portion.

Re: claims 10-15 and 23-28. Muller, as modified, teach in figure 1 of Muller the cooling fins 42 disposed about or in the vicinity of an inner radius of the friction or rotor portion.

Double Patenting

6. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

7. Claim 16 is rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 2 of U.S. Patent No. 7255205 to Plantan et al. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the '205 patent recites a wheel at the axle and the instant

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application recites the wheel rim mounted on the hub end of the axle. Examiner maintains that the wheel rim forms a part of the wheel. Otherwise, both the '205 patent and instant patent application claim a vehicle axle assembly, a vehicle axle, a disc brake, a rotor or friction portion, a caliper, a hub portion, a connecting portion, and the limitation of the outboard position of the friction portion with respect to the wheel envelope formed by the rim such that the radius of the friction portion is greater than the inner radius of the rim of the wheel.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments on pgs. 2-3 filed 8/28/07 with respect to claims 1-28 have been considered and were persuasive but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Response to Amendment

9. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melody M. Burch whose telephone number is 571-272-7114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (6:30 AM-3:00 PM).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Siconolfi, can be reached on 571-272-7124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

mmb

September 4, 2007

Melody M. Burch
Melody M. Burch
Primary Examiner
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9/4/07